A LETTER FROM CANADA
— Murray Ballantyne

# THE Commonweal

## The Irish and The Latins

**Sean O'Faolain**

## Big-Time Little Magazines

**Nicholas Joost**

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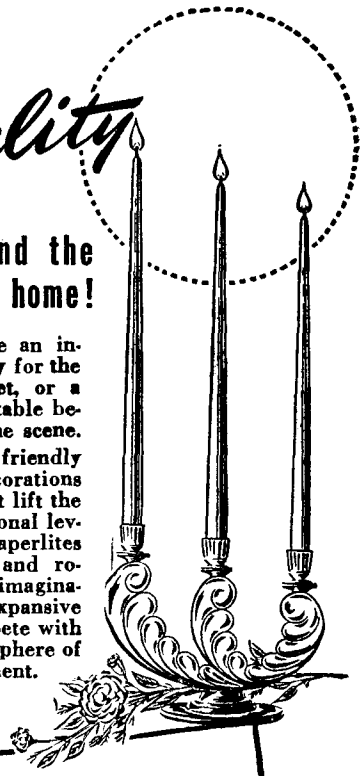

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THE COMMONWEAL
386 FOURTH AVENUE
NEW YORK 16

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Published weekly, printed and copyrighted 1953, in the U. S. A. by The Commonweal Publishing Co., Inc., 386 Fourth Ave., New York 16, N. Y., MUrray Hill 3-9685. Entered as second-class matter, February 9, 1934, at the post office at New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879. U. S. and Canada, $7 a year. Foreign $8. Single copies, 20c.



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# THE Commonweal

## week by week

### VOICE OF AMERICA

TOWARD the end of the late campaign, when some of General Eisenhower's independent supporters expressed their disillusionment at his endorsement of Senators McCarthy, Jenner et al., a disingenuous apology was made for his conduct. The endorsement, it was said, was a necessity because only an Eisenhower victory could insure the decline of McCarthyism as a national menace. Elected, the General would "control" the demagogues in his own party.

The present end of such hopes was summarized in a recent Herblock cartoon. In it Messrs. McCarthy, Jenner, and Velde are seen riding triumphantly, in full witches' garb, through the sky over the national capital. The vehicle for their flight is the traditional one. Watching this phenomenon from the White House lawn, with an expression of puzzled consternation on his face, is the President. The cartoon is captioned "The New Broom."

The Herblock irony seems justified by events of the past month. At this point, at least, it seems that we can expect little effective opposition to McCarthy from the executive branch of the government. When questioned at a recent press conference about whether he thought Senator McCarthy's investigation of the Voice of America is helping the fight against Communism, President Eisenhower replied that well, he didn't know exactly what Mr. McCarthy was aiming to do. It was a question, he said, that he would not answer without a bit more preparation on it because he just had not thought about his particular function, what he can do and what would happen if he did not do it.

IT would be well for Mr. Eisenhower to do his "bit more preparation" quickly. The material for it is close at hand. After his study he might still be unable to pass judgment on Mr. McCarthy's "aims" but he could safely guess the probable result of the Senator's present influence on American life.

It is a result not pleasant to contemplate. For the Senator's mentality and methods are such that, apart from any question of his "aims," he poisons whatever he touches. In his hands the fight against subversion becomes a fight against free opinion, and the quest for "efficiency" becomes a quest for conformity. Any criticism of him is thus, in his view, "a vicious smear job," whoever voices it "a Communist thinker," and any paper which publishes it a local "edition of the *Daily Worker*."

Senator McCarthy has honored publications as diverse as the Washington *Post* and the Jesuit-edited *America* (whose Editor he accused of doing a "vicious smear job" when that journal called him on his own smear of Adlai Stevenson) with his abuse. He seems to define a "Communist thinker" as anyone who dares oppose his own twisted concept of "Americanism." He is the man who has accused both George Marshall and Dean Acheson of a deliberate plot to betray their country, and talked publicly of "beating" a distinguished citizen into conformity with his own views. The fact that he is now so powerful in the Senate that few dare challenge his authority, that through his "investigation" he is actually influencing the policy of both the Voice of America and of the State Department itself, should therefore be a cause for anguished concern to responsible members of both political parties. It should certainly be a cause for such concern for President Eisenhower.

The excuse made for the President's original endorsement of the McCarthy-Jenner tribe was based on a legalistic and, ultimately, amoral philosophy of politics. Party "unity," it was said, demanded the support of all party members, without consideration

cern to President Eisenhower.

A similar legalism is offered now to excuse the President of any responsibility for the conduct of Republican members of Congress. For Congress, it is argued, has the "right" to investigate, and it is a right with which, in the President's own words, it would be dangerous for the Executive to interfere.

The legalism is nice, and in a sense true, but it can be dangerous too. The legislators' right to investigate is not absolute. It should be governed by



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considerations of both justice and prudence. And questions of political morality cannot be forever evaded by appeals to political expediency. Sooner or later, the issue of Senator McCarthy's power will have to be faced, honestly and courageously, by the responsible leaders of his own party.

One hopes that they will face this question, and answer it, before too much of what is decent and intelligent in American life is subverted or destroyed. The voice of a Joseph McCarthy must never become, in fact, the voice of America, but the danger that it may is both clear and present now.

### EVEN THREE LEAGUES OUT

CERTAIN political terms have come to be so charged with emotion in the frenzy of our debates that they produce an almost automatic response. They are invariably synonomous with evil, or with good. "Filibuster," for example, is now so intimately associated with contempt for civil rights that many citizens cannot think separately of the two concepts. We tend to forget that the protection of the rights of minorities was uppermost in the minds of the framers of our government when they provided for this obstructive device. But a situation has arisen in Washington where the filibuster may win certain support as a means toward defending the common good.

The Congressional majority bent on turning over our largely untapped offshore oil resources to the adjacent states is a heavy one. A filibuster is all that is left to the outmanned opposition.

If the "filibuster" seems slated for popular rehabilitation as a political device, "states' rights" appears equally certain to retain the opprobrious overtones that term has acquired in the last two decades of political debate. For the representatives of California, Florida and Texas are claiming title to the offshore oilfields on a states' rights basis. This familiar slogan, which invariably gives warning that private interests seek precedence over public good, is once again noised abroad.

These claims to offshore oilfields go strongly counter to two recent Supreme Court decisions, which upheld the "paramount rights" and "full dominion" of the federal government. They raise certain questions on the score of national defense. But the big issue remains: who is entitled to benefit from these vast material resources, the people of the contiguous states or the citizenry as a whole? The issue is clouded by the unreasonable claims of certain advocates of state ownership. Both Texas and Florida claim underwater deposits as far as ten and one-half miles out, while certain provisions of a Texas Senator's bill would extend state jurisdiction a hundred miles out into the sea (the states to get three-eighths of the royalties on the oil produced beyond the three-mile and three-league limits).

There is no convincing reason for assigning to the governments and citizens of three of our states vast natural resources of such key industrial and military importance. Here is a national asset from which all citizens should benefit. A determined stand by the opposition may even arouse the citizens of other states to assert their stake in national resources now in danger of being lost.

### HOW BIG THE BITE?

IN the early days of the income tax, a good many people regarded its invention as little better than the work of the devil. Even now it is quite true that only the Collector of Internal Revenue rejoices on March 15th, but the number of die-hard foes of the income tax as such has sharply declined. By and large, most Americans today accept the principle of a tax on income, graduated according to ability to pay.

For this reason it comes as a surprise to most people to learn of a flourishing national movement to impose a twenty-five per cent limit on income tax by means of a constitutional amendment. Twenty-eight state legislatures have already passed resolutions favoring such action by Congress; action by a total of thirty-two states could force the calling of a Constitutional convention.

The proponents of this scheme have a certain surface logic in their arguments. Everyone is

## NEXT WEEK

ROBERT BARRAT writes from France on the trial of Germans and Alsatians held responsible for the massacre of Oradour in 1944.

"The order was: 'Don't let a single person escape.' But when we read in our newspapers the testimony of the pitifully few survivors of that frightful day, we could not believe it. How can men reach such a degree of insensibility and bestiality that they can fire point blank at sick people emerging from their beds, burn old men in bakeovens and murder children in full flight? Here is a dimension of the metaphysics of evil that is beyond our powers to comprehend. Perhaps one day we shall be enabled to understand all this, and to forgive. But to our poor human lights how can such crimes not cry to Heaven for vengeance?"



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roughly familiar with the size of the bite taken by income tax out of the salaries of Hollywood stars, for example, and there is some truth in the complaints made by such performers about working most of the year for Uncle Sam. But adjusting the tax rate so it does not unduly interfere with individual initiative and fixing a flat twenty-five per cent ceiling are two different things.

If the attempt to impose a twenty-five per cent limit on income tax were successful, a drastic loss in tax revenue would result almost immediately. The cut would mean relief for a very small percentage of the population with high incomes, but the loss of revenue would have to be made up somehow. Almost certainly the end result would be the introduction in some form of a national sales tax, which would weigh most heavily upon those least able to pay. Whatever adjustments of the tax rate may be in order, out-and-out abandonment of the principle of taxation based on ability to pay is not one of them.

### NINETEEN FIFTY-THREE

IF there is any single thing which may be said about the late George Orwell, it is that he was an honest man—an appallingly honest and consequently quite lonely man. Deception operates at several levels: there is deliberate alteration of facts, calculated lies, and there is rationalization. The latter is perhaps the cardinal sin of those who write on politics and literature.

This is so because "taking a position" is as inevitable intellectually as seeking a refuge, a roof, is in material life. And positions once taken, facts must be adjusted to fit under the roof, to fit into the *Weltanschauung*. Orwell had a unique sort of mind and temperament which made him able to look openly at facts. He was an anti-rationalizist. Thus he could be a Socialist, a leftist, and write *Nineteen Eighty-Four;* he could fight (and suffer serious wounds) for the Spanish Loyalists, and yet attack the Soviet Union for its part in the Spanish war. Every time he found himself in a "position" he seemed constitutionally compelled to unearth all the hypocrisies that might enter into the establishment of that position.

Orwell's *Such, Such Were the Joys* has just been published in this country, and in it Orwell again talks about this question of "positions" versus the facts. And this being a country and a time when popular communications have reached their point of greatest influence, it is worth listening to the single, unsyndicated voice of George Orwell.

The point is illustrated in the case of President Eisenhower's removal of Seventh Fleet restrictions in the Formosa Strait. Periodicals and political figures immediately gave us the background on Chiang, and it would largely have been possible to gauge the person's or magazine's political orientation by the number of troops they reported in Chiang's army.

In the midst of this, the Republican New York *Herald Tribune* published a report by Homer Bigart which analyzed Chiang's abilities in terms not of generalities but of the vehicles Chiang does not have, the pack animals he does not have, the lack of standardization in his small arms, the topography of Fukien Province across from Taiwan, and other such hard and unavoidable facts. It might be most accurate to say that Bigart, like Orwell, thinks that reality does not submit easily to generalization.

From literature to Formosa is not such a far jump, for the essential note is a fanaticism for truth. And although politics is not the objective network that is, say, mathematics, it still is an area where accurate information must precede intelligent policy, and a place where self-deception is especially deadly.

### A MINIMUM REQUIREMENT

VICTORY in the last election went to the GOP, and no one has cause to complain because the policies of the new Administration are Republican in their character. And although it is doubtful that the mandate achieved in November was quite as sweeping as the Republicans would like to make it, nonetheless one can hardly expect New Dealers to be appointed to key government posts.

Even so, there does seem to be legitimate grounds for criticizing the appointment of former Representative Albert M. Cole of Kansas as Administrator of the Housing and Home Finance Agency. The custom of appointing defeated members of one's own political party to administrative jobs is a hallowed one, of bipartisan origin. But it does seem that a better spot could have been found for this defeated Congressman.

Formerly a member of the House Banking Committee, Mr. Cole is considered one of the foremost foes of the governmental low-rent housing program. Vigorous use of the power of the federal government for slum-clearance and low-rent housing may not be in accord with Republican principles, and Congress may intend to limit the program drastically in the future. But even if condolences are soon to be in order, at least an undertaker might have been chosen who would look mournful at the funeral.



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# LONELY ZEALOTS

THERE is something infinitely sad about the formal excommunication of Father Leonard Feeney. Like many others, I knew Father Feeney through his writings in earlier, happier days when he was justly hailed in Catholic circles as the American Church's finest light essayist.

Father Feeney was not without his literary failings, but he stood head and shoulders over other Catholic writers who attempted his sort of thing. If anything, his gravest shortcoming was that the sweetness in his books was a bit too sweet, the light a trifle too lucent. It is hard to realize that the angry, splenetic man of 1953, with his unhappy-looking, tight-lipped followers, is the priest who wrote *Fish on Friday* and the cheerful verse of *In Towns and Little Towns*. Regarding the first of these books, in 1934, the Commonweal reviewer wrote: "He [Father Feeney] loathes the wisecrack, 'a bogus form of humor;' his own he derives from a study of human nature, 'with all its absurdities, scruples and superstitions.' . . . His [Father Feeney's] contacts with non-Catholics are marked with tolerance and comprehension."

It is especially ironic that a piece about Father Feeney's excommunication should be written in The Commonweal, a magazine which Father Feeney long felt was skirting the edges of heresy because of its "tolerance." In Father Feeney's circle "Commonweal Catholic" was frequently used as an opprobrious term. But that too was in the past. Now Father Feeney and his followers themselves stand in need of "tolerance" and understanding.

Father Feeney, it seems, finds it difficult to understand why other men cannot see what, by the grace of God, has long been clear to him; that is, that Christ Who was God founded a Church, that this Church is the one true Church and that to reject it is to reject Him. But to interpret this doctrine brutally, without taking into consideration human nature "with all its absurdities, scruples and superstitions" is, the Church says, not only bad psychology but erroneous theology as well.

The Feeney controversy began as a theological dispute, but whatever claim it had to serious attention on that score has long since disappeared. Now the theological issue has been reduced to an absurdity. Only the formal Catholic can be saved; to defend this doctrine of theirs the disputants put themselves outside the pale of the Church. So they end up rejecting deliberately what the masses of men whom their doctrine would have consigned to hell reject in ignorance.

The matter is of interest now because it illustrates ironically the fatal flaw in Father Feeney's original position. Presumably he is now acting according to his conscience even when he sets himself up against the authority of the Church. How much of this stubborn dedication to the Truth as he envisions it, is clear intellectual persuasion and how much is due to the "absurdities, scruples and superstitions" of human nature, no one can say. God knows, and in the last analysis He alone is empowered to make the final judgment. Father Feeney's present behavior can be judged by a formula: the man himself can be judged only by one who knows what goes on in the depths of his soul.

But what good is logic and argument in a case like this? The time for disputation is clearly past. There remains the priest whose books brought us innocent pleasure in the past and who was able to create a little magic for a wide circle of readers; and with him are those nameless loyal ones who have cut themselves off from their natural human society, gaining a bitter taste at least of what their harsh doctrines would do for the mass of mankind for all eternity. It is not the time for bitterness or for recrimination or for heartless zeal in favor of the true doctrine which has been misunderstood.

Recently I talked to a wise, wondrously Christian woman who had just returned from Africa. She described the complex situation there as almost hopeless. With blacks and whites hating each other, the air clogged with racial tension; with the social abuses of the centuries so well cemented that it seems next to impossible to do anything about them; with different religious groups more interested in fighting each other than in trying to find the way out of Africa's dark night—where do you start? I asked.

"The only possible start," she said, "is somehow to make love operative." It is the one thing missing in the picture, and yet it is the one thing that can resolve the hopeless tangle of conditions there. Love not as a chilly formula, a catechetical response, but as a warm, human reality.

The thought impressed me, mainly because I knew that with this woman there was no cant in what she said. It is hard to offer love as a solution without seeming to be sentimental, or phoney, or blissfully cut off from harsh reality.

It is easy to type out the four letters but hard to translate love into reality. But there come times when he who does not call attention to it is only further obfuscating the issue. This is true when, as my friend said, it becomes clear that only love will light the path that leads again to the brightness of day after a long mistaken night. In the Boston heresy case that much at least now seems clear.

JOHN COGLEY.



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# The Irish and the Latins

**"LAND ANY ONE OF US IRISH IN ITALY AND WE GO ALL NATIVE; BACK TO THE WOMB."**

## SEAN O'FAOLAIN

IT is impossible to talk about "the Latin countries" as if they could all be bottled in one set of generalizations. The Catholicism of Italy is not quite the same thing as the Catholicism of France; the Italian approach to sex is not the same as the French; the lack of social conscience in Spain must astonish a Frenchman; there is anti-clericalism in every Latin country that I know about, but it takes a somewhat different form in each; each has an unique cultural pattern and way of life.

To an Irishman I think the only thing which is equally and blissfully true of them all is that they are not Anglo-Saxon. For there is a lot of truth in Salvador de Madariaga's speculation that the Irish are really a Mediterranean people, and even more truth in his sly suggestion that much of our racial sourness comes from the secret knowledge that we are far more anglicized than we ever care to admit, and can do nothing about it. I know that whenever I cross the Italian frontier I feel I have come home, and that among the hundreds of uncomfortable inhibitions that fall from me is the domination of that English way of life which we Irish call Irish. In Italy I have often felt: "Why, oh why weren't we conquered by the Italians (or the French, or even the Spanish) and given their way of life, instead of this second-hand Saxon suit that fits us like one!"

This is, surely, the core of it all: that every race, like every man, has a nuclear instinct or concept of life personal to itself, and that nine-tenths of its job is to fashion an elaborate vessel to hold and display this instinctive attitude—a vessel that, when fashioned, we will call a racial cultural pattern, a racial art of living. We Irish have not done this. We took over from England its laws, language, food, dress, architecture, games, even its literary tradition, almost everything except its religion. We adapted these things as much as we could, but we had to have them because the English had stripped us of everything of our own, and they are our veneer now; tough, hard, useful, sourly cherished because useful. But scratch an Irishman and you find an Irishman. The unfulfilled atavistic instinct is there all the time, though overtly we are so anglicized that Englishmen are sometimes taken aback to find beneath the familiar exterior the irredeemable Celt. Land any one of us in Italy and we go all native; back to the womb. Italy is the nearest thing to what we might have been and still would like to be.

It takes us quite a while to find out that we are not Italians. At first we are enchanted by the Catholicism of Italy. The essential things of life seem to us to be ordered there by the right philosophy. It is with an enormous relief that we notice that nobody is going about wearing aggressive, pious emblems. (Modern Ireland is painfully aggressive, touchy, fearful about its religion.) It is with dismay that we discover the existence of a political movement called *Azione Cattolica*. We had thought or hoped that we had left all that behind us. And how can one need Catholic Action in a Catholic country? In Ireland we have Catholic Boy Scouts, Catholic Seamen, Catholic Young Men's Societies, Catholic Young Women's Societies, a Catholic Stage Guild, Catholic Commercial Travelers. . . . Even there the adjective seemed redundant. . . . But in Italy!

Our joy in being Catholics in Italy is like the joy of breathing, something one does not think about at all. And then, just as we have been feeling flawlessly happy in the company of a people simultaneously radiant with the joy of this good Life that is, and a deep faith in an even more joyous Life to come, we find ourselves hit by a sudden squall of squeamishness. Those miracles, for example! For while we also believe in miracles we cannot wander about Italy for very long without deciding that we do not believe in miracles all that

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much! I have never asked any other Irishman what he felt at the liquefaction of the blood of Saint Januarius; all I can say is that I beheld the frenzied scenes that accompanied it with a fascinated horror.

On such occasions an Irishman might well feel a tremor of fear. Could it, he may think, by any chance, be a small portion of English Puritanism that has, all unbeknownst, accompanied him to Italy like a mouse in his suitcase? And yet, old civilizations do breed corruption as well as grace. Wines can be kept too long. I prefer the Catholicism of France. I believe Frenchmen know more about religion, and wine.

IT is on such occasions that we do well to remember the differences between the Latin races. The French look crookedly enough at the more orgiastic forms of Italian and Spanish religiosity. The Spanish and the Italians look just as askance at the more frank manifestations of the French attitude to Woman. It is not only a puritanical Englishman, or an infected Irishman, who feels that stiffening of the spine which goes with the feeling of being shocked when he beholds a row of men and women in a Paris café clinched in passionate embrace.

Only twice have I seen public love-making in Italy, though, of course, one sees plenty of playful courtship. Educated Italians are always envying the free way in which boys and girls mingle in Britain and America; no Italian boy dares, for instance, see a girl home unless he wishes to be instantaneously known as her exclusive choice; which is awkward in a country where a girl's one protection against unwelcome attentions is to be known as *fidanzata*—nobody else would ask her out afterwards.

The Italians have a great dignity about sex. They treat it as a serious business, a grave business, a business, as we Irish do, except that they rejoice in this serious business and we are terrified of it. But if we would only be as natural about it as they are, this, I feel, is how we too would behave. We would frankly admire, as we probably secretly do, the sort of women they admire and whose rich, procreative beauty they love to display at every opportunity. We like their animal adoration of children. It is splendid to see the pride of a pregnant Italian, arrogant and honored as an army with banners. It is sad that Irish women are not particularly proud when they are big with child. They are almost as embarrassed as English women.

Italy takes Ireland farther. We boast that we have no respect for the Law; a hang-over from our rebelly days, a poor and timid self-compensation for having, in fact, taken over Lor an' Order holus-bolus. For what is our timid dodgery compared with an Italian's magnificently total contempt for all rules and regulations without exception! And is there anything so foolish as the legend which the English have profitably propagated amongst us and about us—the myth that we love fighting? (We enjoy quarreling, a totally different thing.)

With what relief this priggish load of nonsense falls from our shoulders when we observe the cold-blooded, unenthusiastic and generally cantankerous attitude of the French to all war; the utter dismay with which the Italian faces it, and the delighted agility with which he drops it. We no more like fighting than Shaw's Bluntschli did; in *Arms and the Man,* which the English—for whom war is, or was, of necessity, a great and glorious adventure—at once scornfully turned into a musical comedy, *The Chocolate Soldier*. It seems to me that the Italians and the Spanish are civilized in that they kill with pleasure only for passion and cash.

The Latin spirit throws a deep light into our souls; it exposes our own truth to us. It makes us, for instance, admit with the relief of confession that we are not truthful at all. Have you ever seen Goldoni's play *The Liar?* It could be about Ireland. We are a cynical people, but we are half-afraid to be cynical until we mingle with the Italians.

We are, I truly believe, an artistic people, a people who like color; but have you ever seen an Irish soldier, an Irish policeman? They are slavish copies of the English pattern. Our sailors dare to carry a red bob on top of their caps. It is the one solitary touch of color in all our non-fighting forces. Land us on the Continent and we drink up its color as a thirsty plant drinks water.

WHAT has happened elsewhere to this splendid naturalness of the Latins? An Italian peasant will suckle her child in public; so far as I know the only other women who behave in this civilized fashion are savages. But it is not naturalness in the sense of being uncultivated. Their spontaneous response to nature is part of their whole convention of living, so that it is the essence of their achievement to have clothed the nakedness of nature with a garment of grace that never becomes, as it too often does with other races, a strait jacket; a discipline near to a tyranny.

Compare the Latin idea of the gentleman with the northern idea. That, too, is a very fine idea, sometimes a noble ideal—one thinks of Sir Philip Sidney; but the core of it, when all is said and done, is property, position, the hierarchical outlook *de haute en bas*. It is a revelation to move about Italy with an Italian nobleman—a hereditary noble, not one of those half-million *conti,* and *dei conti* and late-comers to the purple with political or purchased titles. Such a man—he may be by the sea in summer, dressed in old blue jeans and rope sandals—will talk to the fishermen in the *trattoria* with absolute simplicity, both completely at their ease,



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and though it will be evident to everybody that he is a Somebody neither side will give the least sign of their awareness of the practical distinctions between them. And this is quite different from the rather aggressive friendliness, that assertive egalitarianism which is not egalitarian at all, adopted by other races towards poorer foreigners. It is an art, so old now as to be second-nature, so instinctive now that it might be mistaken for Arcadian innocence. It is only when we turn from Latin life—to which I have deliberately confined myself—to Latin painting or architecture, that we realize how deliberate it all is.

But here, at last, one comes up against the one unacceptable anomaly in the Latin way of life. I approach it via the one generalization which holds true for all the Latin countries: that anti-clericalism is rife in all of them. This is not just that sort of sparring that goes on in every army between the rankers and the brass hats, and which sensible Catholics, priests and laity, take for granted, perhaps even welcome as a healthy sign of intellectual independence. There must be something terribly wrong when priests evoke a hatred so terrible that it can only be satisfied, as it was in Spain, by the murder of thousands upon thousands of clerics. It would be a foolish evasion to refer these horrors merely to Communist influence; for why should Communism thrive in countries historically rooted in Catholicism, and wilt in a country like England, now basically Protestant?

At this thought everything one may otherwise say in praise of the Italian concept of the Gentleman seems to fall into pieces; their art of living suddenly seems hollow and rotten at the core; when one remembers the misery of southern Italy and Sicily one wonders how far Catholicism there has failed itself by letting injustice feed into social and religious revolt. And it is a sardonic thought that those cancerous injustices would never have been met and treated clinically, as they now are being treated (ever since the winter of 1949-50), without the financial assistance of the United States, paid for the most part by non-Catholics, even by anti-Catholics, anxious to repair an injury that Catholic Italy has allowed to fester for a thousand years.

It is at this point, too, that one begins to think that, after all, one may have to turn back sadly from the warmth, indifference, ruthlessness and indiscipline of the South to the intellect and the conscience of Catholic France. For while Italy welcomes, France challenges; which is not quite so comfortable.

Italy takes our pleasures farther; France takes our problems farther, the one Latin country in which there is a vital Catholic intellect. Italy may be a joy to Irishmen; she is also a warning to us. And so, we go from one to another, and wish we could make a synthesis of them all: a restlessness that is, I suppose, in the nature of life, part of Adam's curse.

# A Letter From Canada

## MURRAY BALLANTYNE

THE twentieth century has been said to belong to Canada, but the Dominion of the North has been a long time coming into her inheritance. Although Canada covers more than half of North America, she has much less arable land than the United States. Moreover, her growing season is shorter. Stand on the utmost limit of your coldest state, and all that stretches between you and the North Pole is Canadian. We begin where you leave off. Not for nothing did Voltaire label New France a "few acres of snow."

As a result of her climate, she finds her greatest port, Montreal, frozen shut nearly half the year, and her internal communications impeded for many months. As a famous historian has said, Canada is a country in which nature has put up grim resistance before beginning to yield her largesse.

What geography began, history has reinforced. Canadians have always been far fewer than Americans. At the time of the cession of the country in 1763 the inhabitants of the English colonies outnumbered the inhabitants of New France by nearly thirty to one. Even today there are twelve Americans for every Canadian. And these fewer Canadians have a background that makes them careful rather than dashing. At their best they are cautious and sound, at their worst they are stick-in-the-mud. We lack your boldness and your initiative.

You achieved "independence" nearly two hundred years ago, and you drew elan from your daring. We have never talked about independence, and even now very few of us want it. Our goal has not been independence from the British connection, but equality and autonomy within it. And this we have achieved. The Commonwealth is now made up of freely-associated nations united only by traditions and a common allegiance to a cherished Crown. We and our younger sister Dominions have grown up, we have come of age, but in the process we have never broken the family circle.

FOR geographical and psychological reasons we have matured slowly, but at long last the tide of developments and the course of history have caught up with

Mr. Ballantyne is a Canadian journalist and free-lance writer who lives in Montreal.



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us. Never has Canada been so prosperous. We live in a veritable treasure-house of natural resources, and every day brings new discoveries and reveals new uses.

Canada now ranks first in world production of newsprint, nickel, asbestos and the platinum metals; second in aluminum, zinc, gold, cadmium and selenium; third in silver; fourth in lead, copper and cobalt. We have two of the new "miracle" ores, uranium and titanium, in quantity. All sorts of new strikes are continually coming in. And yet we feel that we are only at the beginning of our discoveries.

Iron ore and oil, once the two weaknesses in our raw material picture, now are plentiful.

But perhaps the greatest of our resources is neither a crop nor a deposit but the volume and velocity of our waterways. The white waters that caused early settlers so many pains and delays are now proving to be the backbone of our economy. Already we have developed more power than any other country in the world except the United States, and yet it is estimated that we have harnessed only one-fifth of what is available. This has meant that Canada is the natural site for industries needing vast and cheap supplies of power, notably aluminum. During the war our production on the Saguenay River was enormously expanded, but so quickly has demand increased that we are now developing a new "kingdom" of aluminum on the Pacific Coast at an estimated cost of a half billion dollars.

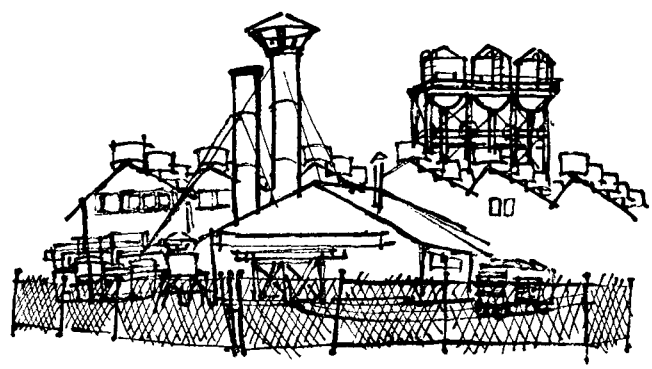
All this bustle and expansion has been reflected in our national finances. Alone among the Allies in the last war we took no lend-lease or other aid from you, but on the contrary mounted our own program of aid at a cost to us of five and a half billions during the war and two and a half billions after. Since our national wealth is generally calculated to be one-fifteenth yours, these gifts would amount to some hundred and twenty billions in your terms. Besides, we have more than balanced our federal budget every year since the war, with a consequent substantial reduction in our national debt. All this explains in part why our dollar recently climbed above yours on the world's exchanges.

YET with all this, Canada's position remains vulnerable because so much of our prosperity depends upon international trade. Despite our small population, we are the fourth greatest traders in the world, and you have long been our best customer and our best market. But we need you more than you need us: our billion dollar trading deficit with you in 1951 was nearly twice as great as the year before. That this trading deficit was more than met is largely due to the inflow of American capital and the American currency drained from other debtor countries. The picture is more favorable for 1952 due to your defense purchases here.

Nevertheless it remains true that we would be acutely vulnerable to any international currency crisis or to any change in your own fiscal policies. We are prosperous, but our prosperity is linked to you. If you cease to support the "have-not" nations, if you cease to bolster European defense, if you cut your purchases from us, then our economy would quickly tailspin. For we depend on world trade, and world trade depends on you.

We have grown up in the shadow, and sometimes in the balance, of two great powers—yourselves and Great Britain. These poles of our policy remain, although their relative importance has shifted. We need you both. We need you ideologically, strategically, and economically. Above all we need to trade with you both, for traditionally our deficit with one has been covered by our surplus with the other. The present divergence between the sterling bloc and the dollar countries is threatening to pull us apart. We cannot let you two go different ways, because if you do separate the rent will be felt in our own flesh.

ACCORDINGLY, we watch you both and we have something to say to you both. It has long been an open secret that our government officials have been less than satisfied with the wisdom of Great Britain's present restrictive trade practices. While sympathizing with her plight, and understanding her political compulsions, we have nevertheless felt that the remedies she has adopted have in part perpetuated the ills from which she suffers.



But if we watch Great Britain with anxiety, we are not without worries as we study your political trends. You are now the world's leading power, and the main proponent of what is left of our common way of life.

When, if ever, are you going to give to the rest of the world that effective entry to your markets on which alone world stability and prosperity can rest? When Great Britain was in your position, the dominant industrial power, she not only opened her markets to the world but she invested her surpluses in all quarters of the globe. You have a long tradition of the protection of special interests, a tradition which at times has



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cost us dearly. Even the treaties negotiated by Cordell Hull made no really effective breaches in your trade walls.

In recent years you have been compensating for these barriers by giving money away. But, as you have discovered, gifts do not win friends. Nor can the rest of the world have any assurance that American handouts—inspiring though they have been—will continue to be politically possible. There will not be stability until there is wide and much freer trade, and there will not be much freer trade until you realize that you are no longer an industrial adolescent needing protection but a world-leader needing markets.

Canada is uneasy despite her present high prosperity, because she needs solidly based world trade to make her position secure. We therefore look about us to see how best we can contribute to localized stability until the far-off day dawns when the cold war ends and the United Nations comes into its own.

NATO is the immediate military answer to this problem, and it is generally acknowledged that our Prime Minister played a large part in the formation of this alliance. But NATO is merely a negative measure, for all the pious talk in clause two which we insisted on inserting. NATO merely gains us time. The real question is how we are going to use that time.

Communism thrives on depression and insecurity. Communism will win despite a dozen defensive alliances unless we can keep our economies strong, and our trade free and full. Canada cannot do this alone, nor can it be done in partnership with either Great Britain or the United States alone. Our history and our geography tie us to both Great Britain and the United States, to the old world leader and to the new.

In our cautious and conservative way we wish to stay on the best possible terms with both, but that means that the two must stay on good terms with one another. To that end we will work, and our work will be all the more effective as we ourselves approach the status of a "world power."

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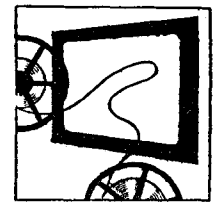
### NATION-WIDE APPEAL

Rt. Rev. Msgr. Edward E. Swanstrom, Executive Director of NCWC War Relief Services, calls our readers' attention to the collection to be taken up in American Catholic parish churches, Laetare Sunday, March 15. The Bishops Fund for the Victims of War will be used to minister to the ten million outcasts of the wars in Korea and Indochina; the two million escapees from tyranny and cold war in West Germany and Trieste, and three million more in Hong Kong and Formosa; the eight million expellees in Germany and Austria; the hard core of still unsettled DP's and Italy's surplus millions; the million homeless Arabs of the Near East.

# THE SCREEN

### BWANA 3-D

IF the moviemakers think they are going to win us to third dimension with exhibits like "Bwana Devil," they are mistaken. It is true that "Bwana Devil" is winning customers into theaters wherever it has opened throughout the country; and it is true that it has a three-dimensional quality that is at times fascinating. Lions and lovers don't exactly leap into your lap, as the advertisements brag, but in one scene when a native African warrior throws a spear at the startled hero, you too are startled because the spear seems to be coming right out of the screen at you.



Hollywood has already been thrown into a tizzy by 3-D (the name given to movies that have this illusion of third dimension; ordinary movies are called "2-Ds" or "flats"). Third dimension is looked upon by the film industry as movies' answer to television. Though promising big things, it is still in its infancy.

Made in Natural Vision Corp's process, which is somewhat similar to the old stereoscope with two images being thrown on the screen, "Bwana Devil" requires that each viewer wear Polaroid glasses (furnished by the management) to get the illusion. There is no eyestrain, but the glasses with cardboard rims are a nuisance, and although you get the effects of third dimension, the images are frequently blurred and you keep thinking that the whole thing is more of an experiment than a finished product.

As a novelty "Bwana Devil" might be an amusing entertainment, but if it's to be considered at all seriously as a movie, it draws a blank. Written, produced and directed by Arch Oboler, this film, though based on a true incident, handles its material awkwardly. Its story, about a couple of man-eating lions that held up the building of a railroad in Africa at the turn of the century, is treated almost like a parody of other African pictures.

IF Hollywood would make more films as good as "Lili" it wouldn't have to fret about 3-D, although it must be admitted that the lovely ballet scenes in this picture would be enhanced by the illusion of depth.

The charm of "Lili" lies not so much in its simple story (script by Helen Deutsch from a tale by Paul Gallico) about an orphan who falls in love with a magician but who learns about true love from a puppeteer, as it is in the execution of its themes.



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Leslie Caron has been perfectly cast as a naive young girl who arrives in this French village and turns in her loneliness to the magician at the carnival (Jean Pierre Aumont). Why shouldn't she fall for this handsome man who can do such wonderful things? And why wouldn't she be crushed when he seems to spurn her? And when the puppets in the show run by two of the magician's friends seem to talk to her, why wouldn't she pour out her heart? It is not till afterward that this girl learns that the leading puppeteer (expertly played by Mel Ferrer) was a ballet dancer who was crippled in the war and is shy about telling the girl of his great love for her.

The scenes in which Lili and the puppets get to know each other and become friendly are extraordinarily moving; and the dance sequences, done in dream style, are a delight. Lili will make you laugh. Lili will captivate you. She is to be seen, not talked about.

FOR moviegoers who like their art to be a little more on the conscious level, there is "Tonight We Sing," which purports to tell the story of Sol Hurok, the famous impresario. This is the kind of movie that is really a series of programs with good singing, dancing, violin playing. That David Wayne doesn't quite make Hurok believable isn't so much his fault as it is the mistaken Hollywood impression of success in the arts.

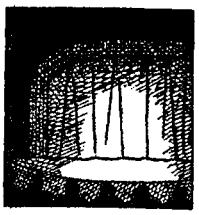
In between scenes showing Hurok's struggle to bring better entertainment to backward citizens in these United States are some very fine concert numbers starring artists like Ezio Pinza as Chaliapin, Tamara Toumanova (looking incredibly lovely) as Pavlova and Isaac Stern as Eugene Ysaye.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

# THE STAGE

### *JOHN BROWN'S BODY*

THE declamation to which Mr. Tyrone Power, Miss Judith Anderson and Mr. Raymond Massey have subjected Stephen Benet's poem is, quite literally, a shocking success. I had no experience of this genre, nor any criterion by which to judge it, omission of last year's "Don Juan in Hell" constituting one of the more outrageous lacunae in my theatrical education. And the opening of "John Brown's Body" is, most emphatically, not auspicious.



One enters to an empty stage, presently to be filled by the chorus. The atmosphere is almost insufferable as Mr. Power bids us welcome, and with a kind of valedictory earnestness, invites participation in orgiastic rites at the Benet Shrine. There follows a little lecture in Literary Appreciation, highlighted by what can only be called a ballet involving Mr. Power and innumerable shreds of paper, all bearing allusion to art and poetry, epic verse, Paris in the twenties, Webster's Dictionary, American nostalgia, Thomas Wolfe, Homer and somebody else (Byron, I think). Then, oracularly, "THIS BOOK HAD TO BE WRITTEN!" and Miss Anderson and Mr. Massey make a spectacular apparition. Can this be Chautauqua at the Century?

A foolish opening, vulnerable to ridicule, but do not be misled by it. Once they have cast off from the rhetorical shores, and sailed out into the rich, deep stream of Benet's humanity, the journey ahead is a splendid one for this distinguished trio. The work with which they are occupied is neither an epic nor a great poem; we have not yet, in this country, the moral material for an epic, and Benet himself, as an artist, never completely eluded the wash of sentimentality over which (in the same imaginative line) only Whitman was able to triumph. But he was an inventive, dexterous craftsman, and he had, moreover, a passionate and various sense of American life, a very genuine openness to its splendors and miseries, together with a root knowledge of the inextricable tangles of blood and love and violence which underlay the terrible schism of the Civil War.

It is this rich human substance to which Mr. Power, Miss Anderson and Mr. Massey have addressed themselves, and which they re-create so movingly. Among his other guises, Mr. Massey is, as always, a persuasive Lincoln; while Miss Anderson, by her personal beauty, her wonderfully plangent and melancholy voice, holds an audience through infinite fluctuations as I have rarely seen one held. But it is Mr. Power who dazzles. What a talent has been slumbering beneath his decorative exterior! He has the range and the variety of a potentially major actor; without impertinence, I should like to suggest him as the most "promising" performer of the year.

Mr. Paul Gregory and Mr. Charles Laughton, sponsors of both these recent elocutionary experiments, must realize, of course, the limitations inherent in their form. Theatre proper is, after all, at once more complex and rewarding than declamation, and one wonders with excitement what Mr. Power, Miss Anderson and Mr. Massey might do with such an embarrassment of personal riches at their disposal. Too often, the evening at the Century has the frozen interest of an arrested drama; what one admires, and wrongly, is the vocal dexterity by which traps in the path are circumvented. And conversely, the best moments of "John Brown's Body" are those in which the scene has the hard, sharp concision of a stage picture, the germ of



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theatre. Nonetheless, it would be fatuous to pretend that the lyric resources of our stage have not been increased by these provocative dramatic gestures. (*At the Century.*)

### MAGGIE

A slumber did my spirit seal during "Maggie," the musical adaptation of Barrie's indestructible fable, "What Every Woman Knows." The Scotsman's definition of charm—if you have it, you don't need anything else; if you don't, it doesn't much matter what else you have—was brutally relevant to William Roy's score. Mr. Roy seemed to court oblivion, embracing the musical cliché with a carnal joy. Give him an English summer house, and he came up with a ballad called "Fun in the Country." His choral interludes never rose above the kind of thumping ditty titled "John Shand's Our Man." And Maggie Wylie's complexes were dismally aired in a dream ballet which found this genial *hausfrau* supporting a band of idiot young gentlemen caparisoned like Space Cadets.

Some very attractive people—Betty Paul, bristling with heather and thistle, O-la-la Odette Myrtil, and a dour Keith Andes—tried to whip this Scotch barley to a broth, but expired themselves in its glutinous jelly. A costly failure too, for by week's end "Maggie," in the pungent Jamesian phrase, succumbed to the excessive tranquillity of its interest. (*Closed at the National.*)

RICHARD HAYES.

## COMMUNICATIONS

### "THE CONSERVATIVE CATHOLIC"

Chicago, Ill.

TO the Editors: I am writing to protest, as strongly as possible, your editorial comment " 'Liberal' vs 'Conservative' " [Feb. 20, 1953] in which you seek to discredit the article by Frederick D. Wilhelmsen "The Conservative Catholic," which you publish in the same issue. The Commonweal is to be congratulated for encouraging serious discussion of the concepts "liberalism" and "conservatism." Why then does it feel the necessity of constructing the straw man represented by your argument that Mr. Wilhelmsen's reasoning logically leads to the restoration of "Otto von Hapsburg and the Holy Roman Empire"? Nothing in his article warrants such an absurd deduction. The whole tenor of his discourse is on an entirely different level, one most appropriate to the fundamental probing of the topic " 'Liberal' vs. 'Conservative.' "

Contrary to your assertion, Mr. Wilhelmsen does indicate what he would work for in our world. His concern for the building of "the first of all human communities, the family unity: sealed, sacred, private" is surely a legitimate goal. In view of Hannah Arendt's *The Origins of Totalitarianism,* his insistence that "the economic and industrial techniques of society must not remove man from existence" and that "Man must overcome corporate estrangement" are hardly out of order.

More important than the pragmatic conclusions which The Commonweal asks for in its editorial are the larger questions which Mr. Wilhelmsen raises. It is here that his article is indeed a contribution of the highest quality. One need not agree with him to applaud his insight into the profound question of the divergent theologies of history which divide our "liberals" and "conservatives." He has given popular expression to a discussion which most deeply commands the attention of all serious thinkers. The heart of the matter is given in his statement "the theology of history of the liberal is eschatological, whereas the theology of the conservative is incarnational." Here is a profound division, whose implications far transcend the kind of objections which you level against his article. Scholars and thinkers, such as De Lubac, Karl Löwith and Eric Voegelin are only beginning to see the implications of these divergent views.

In order to indicate some of the problems allow me to quote a relevent passage from Eric Voegelin's *The New Science of Politics.* Analyzing the question of "the nature of modernity," Voegelin has this to say of the "eschatological" theology of history in our time:

> Gnostic speculation overcame the uncertainty of faith by receding from transcendence and endowing man and his intramundane range of action with the meaning of eschatological fulfilment. In the measure in which this immanentization progressed experientially, civilizational activity became a mystical work of self-salvation. The spiritual strength of the soul which in Christianity was devoted to the sanctification of life could now be diverted into the more appealing, more tangible, and, above all, so much easier creation of the terrestrial paradise. Civilizational action became a *divertissement,* in the sense of Pascal, but a *divertissement* which demoniacally absorbed into itself the eternal destiny of man and substituted for the life of the spirit.

Permit me also a quotation from Karl Löwith's *Meaning in History*:

> The modern overemphasis on secular history as *the* scene of man's destiny is a product of our alienation from the natural theology of antiquity and from the supernatural theology of Christianity. It is foreign to wisdom and faith. Classical antiquity believed that human nature and history imitate the nature of the cosmos; the Old Testament teaches that man is created in the image of God; and the Christian



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teaching is focused on the imitation of Christ. According to the New Testament view, the advent of Christ is not a particular, though outstanding, fact within the continuity of secular history but the unique event that shattered once and for all the whole frame of history by breaking into its natural course, which is a course of sin and death. The importance of secular history decreases in direct proportion to the intensity of man's concern with God and himself. While we are overflooded with secular history but dried up religiously, the *Confessions* of Augustine do not contain the slightest hint at a serious interest in secular events as such. Christianity was thrown into the vortex of the world's history only willy-nilly; and only as a secularized and rationalized principle can God's providential purpose be worked out into a consistent system. As a transcendent principle, the will of God can never become the subject of a systematic interpretation, revealing the meaning of history in the succession and fortunes of states. . . .

In conclusion, let me repeat that Mr. Wilhelmsen has raised to a very high and necessary altitude the discussion of the basic issues between "liberal" and "conservative." The scholars I have quoted might not agree with him, but let us acknowledge that he has defined the issue from a position which deserves a more effective rejoinder than your editorial. The writer of this letter regrets that your editorial hand has so facilely disposed of that which your publishing hand has so wisely printed. Let a fundamental question be given a fundamental response.

EDWARD GARGAN.

Wycoff, N. J.

TO the Editors: I would like to take issue with your delineation of the conservative philosophy in your editorial " 'Liberal' vs. 'Conservative.' " You seem to equate the conservative Catholic's reverence for Medieval Christendom with a total acceptance of the Medieval system. That is neither a just nor logical statement of his position. What he admires in the Middle Ages is the ordered philosophy of life which Christians carved out of the chaos that followed the breakup of the Roman Empire. It was a philosophy that developed the full man, which allowed him to grow physically, mentally and spiritually in a society that recognized his full human dignity.

Again, you assert that the conservative must stand "outside" history. Just what does that mean? Do you believe that history is a living organism independent of the men who shape its course? If so, you embrace a philosophy of historical romanticism. Men are the architects of history not its slaves, and when they decide that the institutions which served their fathers no longer serve them, they can set about changing them. To say otherwise is to succumb to a deterministic cynicism that it unworthy of a Christian. The problem is: Does modern industrial capitalist society permit the full development of the Christian man? The Popes do not seem to think so.

What is the conservative answer to this question? Distributism as preached by Belloc and Chesterton is one, at least. But even if no immediate answer is forthcoming, that should not blind Christians to the necessity of seeking one. To drift along with the tide of historical necessity as you suggest we do is worse than no answer. . . .

GEORGE GENT.

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editors: I hope that in 1953 you won't print anything more regrettable than Mr. Frederick D. Wilhelmsen's article "The Conservative Catholic." The worst thing about it is that it is not clear; the next worst thing is that it is not careful. Mr. Wilhelmsen is too "liberal" with his generalizations and absolutisms. I would have told him to rewrite it with the *Young Catholic Messenger* readers in mind and resubmit it. I think that you would then find him so absolutely wrong that you would reject it; or you would find him so clearly right that he would be writing for, rather than against, liberalism.

He gives me the same impression as Senator McCarthy or Leonard Feeney. He would meet the stampede of secularism head-on—which might be good in text-book metaphysics but which is disaster in social psychology. The liberal would ride with the herd and try to bend it into a U-turn—not reverse it in its tracks. . . .

JOSEPH W. SPRUG.

## THE RISKS OF DEMOCRACY

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: The heated debate over all the phases of the loyalty issue has failed so far, it seems to me, to emphasize one fundamental point: democracy entails by its very nature a great risk.

Democracy is, after all, an open forum; all beliefs and opinions are permitted to vie for acceptance. This includes even ideologies which damn free institutions themselves, and thus—to an extent—democracy must always carry within itself the seed of its own destruction. What will keep it alive, however, is the faith of its adherents that if the forum shall be kept truly open and free, truth and justice will prevail, at least in a measure sufficient to assure the common welfare and an advantageous environment for individual growth.

Democracy is not the only form of political life that carries its own risk. Is not a hereditary monarchy in danger of seeing a scoundrel ascend the throne? Is not



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a dictatorship completely at the mercy of the tyrant's character? And what oligarchy in history did not face the danger of abuse of power by the privileged ruler? All things considered, democracy will seem the least risky of any of them.

The great and complex difficulty, the crucial problem of our day, is to realize that he who seeks a democracy without risk will soon find himself without a democracy at all. Faith is an essential ingredient. If we lose faith in our neighbors to make the proper political choices without outside pressure, in our police agencies and courts to protect us from treason and sabotage without privately conducted loyalty screenings, in our universities to maintain good teaching staffs without the unsolicited aid of junior senators, in our entertainment industry to select its own talents without advice from veterans organizations, etc., etc., then we shall have admitted that democracy simply does not work. We shall have declared in so many words that free institutions of the twentieth century lack the hardiness to cope with the consequences of their innate tolerance.

Perhaps in this age of fear people are no longer ready and willing to live with risks. If so our way of life is already doomed. But at least let it not die without some protest and a reaffirmation of that courage and faith which motivated not only the founders of the Republic but great men at all times, everywhere.

JOHN P. DESSAUER.

# OF NOTE

### *THE INTELLECTUAL APOSTOLATE*

IN the current *Downside Review* (Stratton on the Fosse, near Bath, England), Lance Wright takes up the problem of how the Catholic university graduate may take part in an intellectual apostolate. His article is the substance of a talk given to the Newman Association Summer School at Cité Universitaire, Paris, last August, and includes these remarks on knowledge:

> . . . even if you look at knowledge from the point of view of theology only, you will see that reasonably ascertained "secular truth" must always be a corrective and a sharpener of our ideas about Revelation: we must always use all the truths about Nature which we have learned to date in order to discover, in all its fullness, what God has revealed to *us*. To put it another way, though keeping immutable truths constantly in sight, we are in a developing situation and are expected by God to keep our wits about us. It is a matter of intense satisfaction to me that our own Cardinal Newman should have been the first to give, in his Theory of Development, close attention to the idea of Christian theology as a thing developing in what we of to-day would call "Space-Time." This awareness of what is going on in secular knowledge which is so necessary to keep theology herself alive, is necessary equally if the truths of Revelation are to be accurately applied to the conduct of everyday life. This seems so obvious. Yet the force of it does not seem to strike the majority of Catholics. What I would myself describe as a strong "clerical" bias seems to make us regard secular knowledge as something lying outside the scheme of Redemption: a sort of hobby for the human race and nothing to do with the real business of existence. It is not too much to say that this bias—you cannot call it a polity—has paralyzed the Church's apostolate. Because it is an *intellectual* weakness and because it is concerned with according a just appreciation to so-called "secular" knowledge, it seems pre-eminently the mission of the lay university graduate to put it right.
>
> One of the outward signs of this intellectual vice is to rejoice in what may be described as "Catholic short cuts": to imagine, for instance, that the chief business of the intellectual apostolate is to bring intellectuals back to the Sacraments—whereas in fact this is, of course, only the ultimate fruit of it. Or to reconstruct what Catholics were thinking before the world was affected by developing knowledge, to call this "Catholic" social theory, or "Catholic" philosophy or some such and to attempt to force its acceptance on an unwilling and sceptical world. Underlying all these mistakes is the single mistake of refusing to allow that the facts which man has apparently stumbled on by himself are as much "of God" as those which his Church has mediated. To put it another way, of refusing to acknowledge that what goes on outside Church is as much part of the scheme of Redemption as what goes on inside.
>
> Thus it is that the first duty of the Catholic graduate to-day is towards his own people: to insist on the validity and value of man's so-called 'secular' pursuits in their own right: to acclimatize his own people to the idea that—to take one possible example—a Catholic medical graduate does not take up the career of medicine primarily to "set a good Catholic example" in that God-forsaken milieu, or even to secure the acceptance of what we call "Catholic ideas" in medicine; but primarily in order to advance medicine itself. The other estimable effects will flow as a natural consequence: they queer the issue and make all three desiderata unobtainable if they are given precedence. This is, in point of fact, an exceedingly practical issue in the intellectual apostolate. Time



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and again the Catholic witness has been spoiled because Catholics have deferred, against their better judgment, to what we might not unjustly call "the Catholic party line." This, of course, poses the problem of what happpens when a Catholic in his professional field appears to come into conflict with "Catholic thought" in that field. Earlier I mentioned the vast difference which has come upon Education as a result of what I have been calling a developing theory of knowledge. I believe that the same phenomenon affects equally the position of the Catholic intellectual vis-à-vis "Catholic thought." It is a matter, in practice, of making more of the distinction between Revelation itself—which we receive by Tradition and which has an absolute claim upon us; and the applying of revealed facts to the human situation. In a world like ours, where knowledge itself is developing very fast, it seems that Catholic "case law" —though always of interest in its historical setting —does not occupy the place which up to now has been traditionally accorded to it.

Therefore it seems that the devout Catholic has a duty to be more critical towards it than he formerly would have been. Ultimately he must make an act of faith in the fact that God Himself made the materia of his study and that therefore, as he is in this case alone confronting the facts, the devotional thing to do is to trust his own judgment. This seems a truism, but it is a matter of observation how inhibited Catholics can be when confronting virgin facts.

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**BOOKS**

# Big-Time Little Magazines

## NICHOLAS JOOST

IN an open letter to Stephen Spender, the publishers of *New World Writing: Second Mentor Selection* [New American Library. $.50] disclaim any "prejudiced link to any school, group, cult or movement—academic, literary, or political." Further, they desire *New World Writing* to serve "a useful purpose in offering literary hospitality to good writers from every land and in giving readers a unique chance to make their acquaintance in distinguished company." They hope to make *NWW* "the most universally circulated literary journal in the world. This should result in a unity which brings together intellectuals, members of the literary profession and of the publishing industry, in a sense of discovery, whenever an issue of *New World Writing* appears." Arabel J. Porter, editor of *NWW,* apparently acts more as a coordinator than as an editor in the accepted meaning of the term, while Selden Rodman, it is specified, is a "guest poetry editor" for this one issue.

*discovery,* [Pocket Books. $.35] is edited by two young men, John W. Aldridge and Vance Bourjaily, one a teacher-critic and the other a novelist. Their statement of policy informs us that "the magazine will be governed by none of the [frustrating] editorial taboos, so enormously destructive to creative work. . . . Only the legal precedent established by our best trade publishers and our own taste as editors shall determine the acceptability of language, theme, or subject matter"; "The magazine will be unedited in the current sense of the word, which is to say that no attempt will be made to homogenize or otherwise adulterate the contents to meet the specifications of a particular style or school of writing, or to satisfy the demands of a pressure or special-interest group." "In sum, we mean to edit *discovery* for its writers rather than for its readers, in the firm conviction that the role of literature in human history is to lead and not to follow." And the audience for this venture? It is "the same audience which buys serious, paperbound reprint books"; it will respond to "quality and candor" as it has never responded to "slickness and temporizing."

Quite obviously *NWW* will continue to be a miscellany reaching the widest possible international audience, and *discovery* intends to pursue a policy of the-reader-be-damned. Both books are oddly vague when it comes down to the brass tacks of overtly stating *what* is printable as literature. Aldridge and Bourjaily appeal to legal precedent and their taste as editors, but one is hardly an esthetic criterion, while the other is no better than a sort of smoke screen that hides much and reveals little. The publishers of *NWW* admit their debt to John Lehmann's late Penguin *New Writing,* but they insist that their magazine be a "vicarious literary salon," not the reflection of one editor's tastes, however brilliant. One does read between the lines a suggestion that *NWW* is intended to be a paying proposition—not so much an experiment like Lehmann's *New Writing* which explored the field—as a steely, shining, efficient success as the "most universally circulated literary journal in the world." Undoubtedly many will be titillated, but few will be outraged by *NWW.*

ISHERWOOD, Merton, Tennessee Williams, J. B. Rossi were among those in the first issue of *New*

Mr. Joost teaches at Loyola University in Chicago and is assistant editor of Poetry.



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*World Writing,* and in the second are Dylan Thomas, Auden, Jean Genet, Viereck, and Robert Cantwell, as well as a selection by Kimon Friar from four contemporary Greek poets. None of these takes much courage to print, of course, but for every Cantwell and Auden *NWW* contains its unknown, its new writer, such men as Charles Fenton, with his essay on "Ernest Hemingway's Kansas City Apprenticeship," and John Goodwin with his "The Visitation," from an unpublished novel.

In general, however, the fiction here is less distinguished than the poetry. There is simply no excuse at this late date for taking James Jones as seriously as Scribner's advertising department does, and whatever its merits, Dylan Thomas's "Adventures in the Skin Trade" is of major interest only because Thomas is our greatest living lyric poet.

The newer writers are a mixed lot, with an agreeable emphasis on the exoticism of their national origins and the locales of their stories: Arthur Lall writes of his India in "Tiger, Tiger"; Celso Al. Carunungan writes of his Filipino childhood in "Like a Big, Brave Man"; and we have a chapter from James Goodwin's Haitian novel. But alas! there is also Calder Willingham, whom, we read, Shelby Foote describes as ". . . unquestionably the best of the young writers," but who from this vantage point seems only intrepidly vulgar.

Selden Rodman has fulfilled his responsibilities as poetry editor well on the whole, even though what we get are bits and pieces by the talented and near-talented. A new poet named Joseph P. Clancy is excellent, if one can judge by one selection, "Adam's Children." On the other hand, it is impossible to fathom what whim prompted Rodman to accept Theodore Roethke's "Poems for Children," crude and inchoate jottings by that glittering roarer, who himself should have known better than to publish such stuff. Poems by the Polish Casimir Wierzynski, the British Roy Fuller, and the Pakistani Sirajuddin Zafar also appear, evincing further *NWW*'s aspirations as an international journal.

But the success of *NWW* is its esthetic criticism, each essay of which is distinguished, if only because it may enrage us. Corrado Alvaro writes, for example, that "in the Middle Ages, too, man humiliated, debased, distorted and depersonalized himself," yet this cross-eyed *aperçu* is part of a most interesting essay on the contemporary hero in art. Robert Cantwell on the Faulkner family; Charles Fenton on Hemingway; Selden Rodman on a Los Angeles "primitive," Simon Radilla; Auden on Grimm and Anderson, are variously excellent. But the most suavely written as well as the most contentious critical essay is that by Alwyn Lee on "Henry Miller—the Pathology of Isolation."

Taken all in all, *NWW* is not distinctively "Amer-


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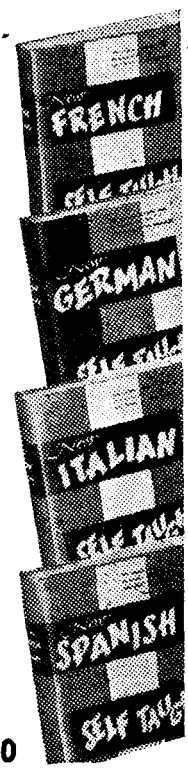


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ican." It is not a little magazine. It reflects no one editorial personality. It is, nevertheless, entirely worth the doing. As far as the publishers find it feasible, they introduce new talent, and most of the contributions by established writers are at the least respectable. Occasionally, as with Isherwood, Merton, Rodman, and Auden, these pieces add to the stature of the writers. And let us consider whether a miscellany of this type does not more truly mirror America's pluralistic culture than the more conventional little magazine, such as *Partisan Review* and *Poetry,* which neither desires nor pretends to the international mass audience of *NWW.*

THE case of *discovery* is different, far different. Here we have a little magazine attempting mass circulation. The attempt does not come off, for two reasons. Except for its very attractive Mondrianesque cover, which is a snare and a delusion, *discovery* is one of the most needlessly ugly paper-bound books in all that vast field. And except for William Styron's "Long March"—which, if we may quote Mr. Foote, establishes Styron as unquestionably the best of the young writers (leaving out Messrs. X and Y and Z)—the contents of *discovery* are grimly bad.

Stanley Baron contributes a meandering dirty joke. Norman Mailer, for all his great gifts, does the wrong thing in the wrong way with "The Dead Gook." Marguerite Young is not very funny with "The Hangman's Tale." There is a pseudonymous confession that debunks marijuana addiction. There is a *Saturday Evening Post*-like survey of Cleveland by Herbert Gold. The poems range from the sniggering to the inadequately observed, as in Richard Lyons' unintentionally amusing "Prairie Wife," which outdoes "Cold Comfort Farm" in its way. No belles-lettres, no literary criticism lighten these pages. Over the whole production hangs the pall of that stalking corpse, the social realism of the thirties.

John Aldridge recently wrote a severe essay in *Partisan Review* taking Americans to task for their complete lack of manners, good, bad, or indifferent. I suggest that *discovery* proves his case. The manners of this issue are appalling, and so is the taste of the editors, who confuse freedom of expression in art with an absolute lack, in most of their selections, of any manners except those of the *lumpen*-intellectuals. It is always dangerous to confuse morals with manners and freedom of the artist with tact. *discovery* is hardly the journal to be touted by its publishers as containing the work of "America's most talented writers," for of all the writers in it, only William Styron is centrally concerned with a moral problem in the major tradition of the West.

And it is Styron who makes *discovery* worth the buying, with his beautiful short novel. *Long March* is the best work of fiction in *discovery* or *New World Writing.* Just as James Jones and Calder Willingham are popular caricatures of what the young American writer is doing; just as Norman Mailer is a depressing example of how deliberately to set about destroying one's talent; so William Styron shows us that the young American writer is capable of development, that he has something to give the world beyond a suave internationalism, a deadening social realism which has served its purpose, and the *furor scribendi* of an expressionism that tells its public of shackles outworn and now cast off. This development of the most representative young American writers seems to be in the direction of a more conscious symbolism and a fuller vocabulary, and concomitantly a consideration, as yet tentative and humble and tortured, of the theological dimension, the mystery of the soul's yearning.

Of all possible developments of *NWW* and *discovery,* surely the most salutary would be an increased sensitivity, an increased receptivity, to the possibilities which we see in writers such as William Styron.


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# The Obsession of Violence

**HEMINGWAY. By Philip Young. Rinehart. $3.**

By FRANCIS X. DUGGAN

MR. Young describes the "Hemingway hero" as a "sensitive, humorless, honest, rather passive male. He is the outdoor man, who revels in the life of the senses, loves to hunt and fish and take pride in his knowledge of how to do such things. He is virile even as an adolescent, and very conscious of his nerve; maturity has forced a reckoning with his nerves as well. Once grown, he is a man who knows his way around, but he is superstitious too, and is developing a complex ritual whereby thinking can be stopped, the evil spirits placated and warded off."

He is a man wounded physically and psychically by violence encountered in his youth and he has learned a code of conduct from hardened men who conduct themselves with a certain honor within the limits of their compromised acceptance of the violence of our time. And he achieves, finally, a "veneration for humanity, for what can be done and endured, and this grasp of man's kinship with the other creatures of the world, and with the world itself, is itself a victory of substantial proportions."

This hero is Hemingway himself, whose life closely resembles that of his composite hero. Mr. Young's method, in depicting the Hemingway hero and drawing correspondences between him and his creator, is to consider the various protagonists as one hero, so much so that he can write of Robert Jordan: "Although he has become somewhat jocular (perhaps as a result of relief from guilt feelings got rid of in the last novel. . . . )."

Mr. Young sees origins of Hemingway's style where others have seen them—in Stein, Crane, Anderson, and Pound. Of this style he says that Hemingway's "subject is violence and pain, and their effects, and the recovery from the effects in the face of and partly through more of the same. The style which expresses this subject matter is itself perfectly expressive of these things, and of the message: life, which is the material, must be constantly forced under the most intense and rigorous control, and held in the tightest rein, for it is savage and can get out of hand." And the style, too, is the man: "The man learned to hold tight, not think, and let in the little at a time that he could control. It was a big part of his partial recuperation that he learned also to write a prose in which he could write things out the way he let them in."

But to understand fully the significance of Hemingway's fiction, Mr. Young insists, we must go back to Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn,* which is not only an idyll of escape and adventure and a rejection of middle-class virtues, but primarily Twain's re-creation of the "hideous violence and death" he witnessed and of the "horror of them that he learned as a boy and never forgot."


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Hemingway resembles Twain not in mere literary derivation, but because of the "psychological and biographical" links between the two writers, and because of "their parallel exposures and responses to violence and pain."

Furthermore, argues Mr. Young, the things experienced and written about by Hemingway and Twain are as real a part of the American scene as Howells's "large, cheerful average of health and success and happy life," or as Robert Frost's life "of common sense, of wood smoke and apple orchards." Says Mr. Young: "The serious writer who does nothing today to contradict or qualify 'the greatness of ideals, and joy in simple things' becomes party to a conspiracy to ignore a good deal of what we all know to be real." The serious writer reacts, as Dreiser did, "in disgust from the piety and cant our people are fed commercially."

Hemingway's vision, Mr. Young admits, is a narrow and limited one, obsessed with violence and ignoring much of life, but it is a peculiarly incisive view of our time.

# Loyalties in Conflict

HEAR AND FORGIVE. By Emyr Humphreys. Putnam. $3.

By JOHN A. LYNCH

A WELSHMAN, Emyr Humphreys first published his novel in England. An interesting, serious, highly intelligent work, its appearance here should be most welcome, although the drugstore trade, in its time, may not be able to get next to it.

Mr. Humphreys gives us in David Flint, a complicated young man who has just turned thirty, novelist and schoolteacher, and in his other figures, those jabbing, parrying, winning, losing friends of David's, as fine a set of characters as I can remember in a contemporary novel.

David is a man who, in his own words, "cannot live for long without the company of women." Yet he is also "religious enough by nature" that he applies himself quite affirmatively to teaching Scripture in a secondary school. Garrulous, a lover of good times, he yet likes to lie alone in the park and listen to the grass grow.

With all these attentions, though, he is not a farce. He has just got himself so mixed up in his loyalties, to his wife, to his mistress, to his school, to his art, to his friends, that he cannot, until suddenly thrust face to face with reality (although he often feels that he is ducking the issue), see his way out to clear ground.

Roger Allenside, blackmailer and blackmarketeer, is his friend. Allenside's brother, Edward, to whom David is devoted, is his proper and strict headmaster. Phyllis is his wife, Helen his mistress, and Marian a lover who was killed in an air raid. Brunt and Visot are Communists who teach at the school and for whom David would lay down his life.

The confusion is complete, and the catalyst, starting order out of disorder, is Helen's turning on him,


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Worn, buffeted, but at peace, he entered once again the house of his wife and child.

## Southern Roots

A GOOD MAN. By Jefferson Young. Bobbs-Merrill. $3.

THE PLANTATION. By Ovid Williams Pierce. Doubleday. $3.

By ALFRED O'BRIEN, JR.

HERE are two Southern writers who seem consciously bent on uncovering kindness and light in their homeland. Jefferson Young, who is thirty-two and a graduate student at Tulane University, tells us in *A Good Man* about a Negro

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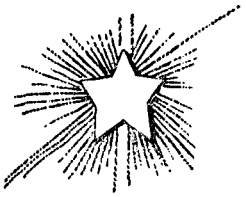

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farmer in Mississippi who wants to paint his house white instead of the expected gray. He intends to pay for the white paint by selling a fattened calf.

Several white people in town try to bring him back to his senses, and eventually succeed in frightening the farmer's wife. She kills the calf the day before it's to be sent to auction. It's only after killing the calf that the wife understands why her husband wanted to, or had to, paint his house white.

Albert, who is the farmer, has all the acknowledged peasant virtues. In addition, he is respected by some white people and most Negroes, and in general trusts white people. He is a person who has had his share of bad seasons, and has gotten along well in life. He has acquired a certain amount of dignity, and that dignity needs an outward manifestation which would be the white house.

Albert has a kind of classical humility in that he accepts the conditions of his life like the poor people do in so many Italian movies, or like Aeneas accepts the storms and drowning of his friends. However, he is not the universal man-on-the-land that Mr. Young may want him to be. Albert is most real when he's pinned down to time and place. And so is the novel, for the people in the story who are most striking are the hard-bitten Southern whites who seem to be almost childishly evil.

PIERCE, a professor at Tulane University, writes in *The Plantation* about a man who leads a quiet and lonesome life as the head of a family and owner of a plantation in North Carolina before the turn of the century.

"I tried to make of *The Plantation,* in part, what my father's generation meant to me as I looked back upon it as a child," says Pierce.

It mean knowing his people primarily for their kindness, honesty, and loyalty to their family and its traditions. It also meant knowing loved and respected people.

As with many characters in Henry James' novels, we see the hero of this novel, Mr. Ed Ruffin, through the eyes of those who are closest to him. Mr. Pierce handles the device well, but he allows his story to become cluttered up with side issues. Result is, there are all kinds of loose strings waiting around to be tied up. The writing, however, is disciplined, and seems to have the control that comes with honest work.

## Early Modern

ERASMUS OF ROTTERDAM. By J. Hayzinga. Pantheon. $2.50

By SERGE HUGHES

ONE of the more unhappy results deriving from an uncritical appraisal of medieval culture is the patronizing or even contemptuous attitude some Catholics hold toward Erasmus. The attitude is not only patronizing, however. It is mistrustful and hostile, very much like the common estimate of the Renaissance taken as a whole. Erasmus is accused and condemned as a coward, as if it were given to every Christian to endure martyrdom for the Faith. He is accused of being more pagan than Christian, as if every major Christian thinker who comes to grips with the classical world must not expose himself to that charge. He is accused of being a dilettante, a litterateur whose philological criticism was painfully inept, as if the scholarship of his own times were so much above his. Today the real reason for so much hostility will perhaps be found in the antipathy or bewilderment that most people feel for complex, incredibly complex, religious personalities. It is the incurably romantic desire for all-of-one-block personalities which can be easily grasped and judged that makes any equitable judgment about him impossible. It is this type of simplificatory intelligence that will never understand a Petrarch, Pascal, or Newman.

If one allows, however, for a certain inevitable amount of schizophrenia in the world that twisted itself away from the Middle Ages, Erasmus, as Professor Hayzinga demonstrates conclusively in this careful study, will not appear simply as a forerunner of Voltaire. That portrait is a caricature. He will appear as a very contradictory, intelligent man, who with all his faults and idiosyncrasies, fought constantly not to let zeal degenerate into fanaticism and not to allow the tolerance that flows from charity to be confused with the tolerance based on the gray resignation to the falsity of all apparent truths. Cerebral, and over-cerebral, Erasmus may have been at times. Isn't that preferable, however, to an amorphous emotionalism?

## Eastern Survey

ASIA AFLAME: Communism in the East. By Ebed Van der Vlugt. Devin-Adair. $6.

By JOSEPH R. FISZMAN

EBED Van der Vlugt is a native of Holland who lived for years in the Dutch East Indies and is an active European journalist. General A. C. Wedemeyer presents him in the Foreword to *Asia Aflame* as a "scholar, journalist and barrister with deep experience in the Far East."

Van der Vlugt's book is an attempted survey of the social, political and economic conditions in the various countries of the Middle and Far East. It takes the reader on a very fast tour indeed, and the author gives his explanations like a guide who has collected his fee and is in a hurry to be rid of his customers because a new planeload of American tourists has arrived.

Van der Vlugt rightfully sees a Red conspiracy throughout all Asia. But he sees no difference in fact between Communists and Democratic-Socialists. With one breath he utters the names of Lenin and Jaurès, and although he admits that Nehru is "a stabilizing influence" he still does not trust Nehru's "high-flown idealism." He writes about such Communist fronts as the World Federation of Trade Unions (which "technically combines Communists and Socialists") but makes no mention whatsoever of the democratic International Confederation of Free Trade Unions which does such an important job in the Middle and Far East.



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Van der Vlugt has a number of historical misconceptions about China. When he speaks of Burma he shows nothing but contempt for its government, which is now waging a struggle with all kinds of international adventurers and various Communist bands, and is going through a difficult period of transition. Characteristic of his attitude is the statement that the withdrawal of the French from Indo-China "would not only be a betrayal of civilization, but also a betrayal of a people that had always enjoyed a large measure of protection from the administrators and troops of France, who guaranteed a state of law and order in which the country could further develop." (Only ten pages back he had described how the French broke the native nationalists along with the Trotskyites and Stalinists and forced them all underground.) When he writes of Siam he ignores the main reason why this is the only country in all of Asia which is almost entirely free of Communists—the fact that Siam, as a result of a rivalry between Britain and France, managed in the course of her history to maintain independence from foreign imperialism.

Colonialism is, I think, clearly a thing of the past. And so the free world must have a new, concrete and positive plan to halt the march of Communism in Asia. From Mr. Van der Vlugt, who speaks with authority, one might expect some sound proposals, but what he offers is a disappointment.

He believes that Russia, because of mounting interior difficulties and fear of the growing preparedness of the West, will launch a war now. He therefore advises that Communism "be checked here, and set back there." He speaks also of a propaganda drive, of telling the people of Asia about "our own higher standards of material living," of technical aid and a revitalized offensive of Christian ideas. But all of this remains rather vague.

The United States, which among all the Western powers has the least tainted record and whose actions in the Philippines, Japan and Korea have emphasized her good will, should take the lead in the campaign to save Asia, of course. But the hopes of the free world must lie primarily with those awakening native peoples who won their independence after the Second World War. The last Conference of the Asian Socialist Parties in Rangoon shows that the most active and progressive elements in the free Far Eastern countries have a growing realization of the Communist danger, and it is America's most challenging mission to lift them from the neutrality to which they were forced by fear and by their previous sad experience with the West.


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